

National Defense Service Medal; and six Good Conduct Awards.

Thurston Womble's final days where spent with the family and friends he loved so much—and doing what he enjoyed most, golfing and fishing. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Olive, their children, Noreen and Eric, Eric's wife Wendy and grandchildren, Melissa and Matthew. I extend my sincere condolences to the entire Womble family on their loss. I also want to thank Thurston for his dedicated service to our country and for setting an example that the rest of us can only hope to emulate; our great Nation owes him a debt of gratitude.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL MICHAEL
J. DELANEY

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Lieutenant Colonel Michael J. Delaney of our Army's Office of Legislative Liaison. Lieutenant Colonel Delaney has distinguished himself as an outstanding American soldier from the great State of Virginia and will soon complete over 23 years of selfless service to the Nation in the United States Army. His dedication to Soldiers, commitment to excellence, and performance of duty has been extraordinary throughout his career and, especially over the past 4 years, has cemented the positive relationship between Congress and the U.S. Army. He will retire on August 1, 2004.

Over his 23 years of selfless service, Lieutenant Colonel Delaney served in a succession of command and staff positions worldwide. As a junior officer, he stood at the forefront of freedom during the Cold War in Germany. From the Cold War frontline, Lieutenant Colonel Delaney earned his wings as an aviator and qualified on a variety of rotary wing and fixed wing aircraft. During Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Lieutenant Colonel Delaney commanded an aviation unit based at Fort Belvoir. Despite the wide dispersion of his unit throughout the combat theater, they were able to successfully accomplish their mission due, in no small part, to his exceptional and inspirational leadership. Lieutenant Colonel Delaney has since served in a variety of positions of increasing responsibility.

For the past 4 years, Lieutenant Colonel Delaney has served as a congressional liaison for the U.S. Army. Perhaps this assignment was pre-ordained, as Lieutenant Colonel Delaney's wife, the former Susan Fanning, served as staff to Senator Paul Laxalt of Nevada. His mother-in-law, Shirley Fanning, also has a history with the Senate as she served on the staffs of Senators Everett Dirksen and Strom Thurmond for 25 years. Lieutenant Colonel Delaney's work as a legislative liaison and as the Chief of the Programs Division enabled the Army to provide this Congress the information we need to accomplish our constitutional duties. His efforts have been exceptional and noteworthy in

working with Congress during a critical time as the Army undertook transformation, in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and during our current efforts with the Global War on Terrorism. Throughout this critical time Lieutenant Colonel Delaney has fostered a personal relationship between Congress and the U.S. Army.

Lieutenant Colonel Delaney holds degrees from George Mason University, B.A., 1981, and the Naval War College, M.S., 1996. His military awards include the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Master Aviator Badge.

Lieutenant Colonel Delaney represents the epitome of what the Army seeks in a congressional liaison and the country expects from our officers. His service to the Nation has been exceptional, and Lieutenant Colonel Delaney is more than deserving of this recognition.

ROBERT A. RIESMAN

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life of Robert A. Riesman, who, sadly, passed away on June 2 in Providence, RI.

Robert Riesman was a Renaissance man and a prominent Rhode Islander, who succeeded in and devoted himself passionately to all aspects of his life. He was a decorated soldier, a successful businessman, and a leader in Rhode Island politics. He was a philanthropist, a dedicated man of faith, and a devoted father and husband.

But my own words cannot fully convey the value of Bob Riesman's character and achievements. This can best be expressed by Mr. Riesman's close friend and my esteemed colleague, Senator JACK REED, whose eloquent eulogy of June 6 describes Mr. Riesman in the most human terms.

Therefore, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator REED's eulogy be printed in the RECORD.

IN MEMORY OF ROBERT A. RIESMAN

Last Thursday, Richard Licht and I spoke. We quickly concluded that, outside our own families, Bob Riesman was the finest man that we had ever met. Then, we also quickly concluded that we tend to give our families a little extra credit.

Bob Riesman was my hero.

He lived his life heroically. He lived with honor and with a commitment to high ideals. He pursued wisdom. He cherished family and friends. He set an example of decency and integrity and modesty. He time and time again entered the arena to be part of the great issues that shaped his generation and shaped our lives. But, he never forgot that life is little things, too: acts of kindness, moments of humor, sharing life's joys and disappointments with family and friends.

He was an American hero.

He joined the Field Artillery at Camp Ethan Allen in Vermont many months before Pearl Harbor. He had just graduated from Harvard. Bob was always very proud of his Harvard diploma, but declared that he was educated at the Boston Latin School.

He served with the First Infantry, his beloved "Big Red One". He fought through North Africa and Sicily. His soldiers admired his fearlessness and his authenticity. For his

courage under fire, he was awarded the Silver Star. For his wounds, he was awarded the Purple Heart. Because of these wounds, he had to leave the First Division and he became an intelligence officer with the First Army. The last days of the war found him as a staff officer in Paris.

We always spoke together about the Army. Every conversation in some way or another touched on our youthful and lifetime devotion to the Army. Bob seldom, if ever, talked about the difficult moments. He recalled the camaraderie. He spoke of his admiration and respect for Sergeant Vic Lister and the other American soldiers that he led. He spoke about the leaders that he admired and those he found lacking. We both reveled in those memories of soldiers and soldiering, he knowing far better than I the terrible cost of war.

Bob Riesman saw the horror of war but refused to surrender his spirit to its brutality. And having seen that horror and bearing the memory forever of those young soldiers who never returned, Bob's return was not simply an occasion for celebration. It was an opportunity and an obligation to engage in another struggle; the struggle of a committed citizen to build a just and decent society in America and to be a force for peace and justice around the world.

And, Bob never wavered from that commitment.

Bob Riesman was a man of great faith and great tolerance.

His parents taught him to cherish his Jewish faith and act on this faith to serve his neighbors and his community and his country. Bob's faith was more than just a theological exercise. It was for him a summons, not just to reflection, but also to action.

Bob Riesman was my friend.

To sit by him and to feel the comfort of a kindred spirit, to listen and learn, to trace and retrace the days of our lives, to share good wine and good conversation, to know the feeling of unqualified support and affection was a precious and enduring gift to me.

On one memorable evening, we rode together, just the two of us, back from West Point. We had been up for the day to visit the newly dedicated Jewish Chapel at West Point. Bob and I attended services with the Cadets and then had supper with them. It had been a splendid day for the both of us, but a special day for Bob, uniting both his faith and his Army. In the nighttime drive, we spoke of many things. At one point, we began to discuss William Butler Yeats. Bob, as he often did to my amazement, began to recite from memory passages not only from Yeats, but W. H. Auden's famous lines:

Earth receive a honored guest
William Yeats is laid to rest

Today, earth receives another honored guest.

Bob taught me so much and, along with my Father and Mother, set an example of what, on my best day, I might hope to be.

His approval meant the world to me. I recall those times when we spoke and he was particularly pleased by something he had read or heard about me. He would say "my boy, you are a credit to the Regiment."

In a life of extraordinary achievement, Bob's greatest achievement was his marriage to Marcia and their wonderful children and grandchildren. Marcia and Bob were best friends as well as husband and wife. To watch them was all you needed to know about respect and commitment and deep and abiding love.

Bobby and Jeanie are their parents' pride. Whenever I asked about either of them, Bob's eyes would light up and his voice would resonate with uncontained joy and pride. This reaction was only exceeded when we spoke about Abe and Clare.

At this moment, I know we all wish for one thing, to have a few minutes again with Bob, to be with him before the fire on Freeman Parkway or watching the sun set in Middletown, to feel the comfort of his presence, to know that in a life that can mean there was at least one who was noble. But, that cannot be.

And knowing this, our hearts would surely break save for one thing. Bob made us stronger and better by his life. He has given us the example and the ability to carry on. And, we will.

Dear friend, I shall miss you.

Dear friend, "you have been a credit to the Regiment."

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF DANIELLE MILLER

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute and congratulate Danielle Miller of Louisville, KY on being named a distinguished finalist for the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. This award honors young people in middle level and high school grades for outstanding volunteer service to their communities.

Danielle Miller founded a service organization called the "National Awareness Committee" to provide clothing, books, and other needed items to members of the Lakshota Sioux Nation living on a reservation in South Dakota. Danielle became aware of the Lakshotas needs during a school presentation by the Native American Support Effort—NASD—in the eighth grade, and became a volunteer. Although she was too young to go on a mission to the reservation, she realized she could accomplish a great deal in her community.

Danielle Miller planned and organized five collection drives at local schools and in nearby communities, and gathered enough clothing, blankets, kitchenware, bicycles and books to fill a 52-foot truck. She recruited volunteers to help sort, pack, and load the donations, and personally accompanied the shipment to the Rosebud Reservation in southern South Dakota. Danielle plans to make a documentary film that will be used to make even more people aware of the Lakshota situation.

The citizens of Louisville are fortunate to have a young lady like Danielle Miller in their community. Her example of dedication, hard work and compassion should be an inspiration to all throughout the entire Commonwealth.

She has my most sincere appreciation for this work and I look forward to her continued service to Kentucky. •

MG EDWARD MECHEMBIER

• Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, today I wish to share with my colleagues a story about a wonderful American who I have had the privilege of personally knowing for many years. I am talking about MG Ed Mechenbier. I have had

the honor of knowing him as a friend and as a true patriot of the American spirit and soul. On June 30, 2004, MG Ed Mechenbier will celebrate his retirement from the United States Air Force Reserve following a brilliant military career that began in 1964 when then Cadet Mechenbier entered the United States Air Force Academy.

My friend Ed Mechenbier is a very humble man, not known for patting himself on the back or openly touting his many accomplishments. But, he is a hero in many respects. He is a man who is driven by a sense of duty, a sense of honor, and a sense of country.

In June 1967, Ed Mechenbier found himself flying an F4C Phantom II fighter while assigned to the 390th Fighter Squadron, Da Nang Air Base, South Vietnam. On June 14, 1967, Ed was assigned a strike mission against the Vu Chu railroad near Kep, approximately 30 miles northeast of Hanoi. This flight was the 80th mission for then 1LT Ed Mechenbier. June 14, 1967, also marks the day that Ed became a Prisoner of War after his aircraft suffered a direct hit from a surface to air missile. Little did he know that when he began his 80th mission that he would not leave the Hoa Lo prison, which is also known as the "Hanoi Hilton" for the next five years, eight months and four days.

The stories that our former POWs describe remind us of the tremendous fighting spirit and sense of survival that distinguish and define the modern day American warrior. February 12, 1973, became a day of freedom for Ed and many other POWs who were released to return with honor to the hallowed soil of the United States. Upon return home, Captain Mechenbier was awarded the Silver Star with the Oak Leaf Cluster for his resistance to demands by the North Vietnamese for information, confessions, and propaganda material. In addition, Captain Mechenbier was awarded the Bronze Star with distinction for his efforts to conduct himself strictly in accordance with the Code of Conduct during his capture and imprisonment. The POW credo "Return with Honor" is exactly what Ed Mechenbier did. Throughout his imprisonment, he did not lose his fighting spirit. He did not lose his sense of hope. And, he did not fail to remain anything, but a shining example of a warrior whose duty assignment had been temporarily changed.

The irony of this story continues and on that day in February 1973, an Air Force C-141 Starlifter had been dispatched to the Gia Lam Airport in Hanoi, North Vietnam. To the casual observer, the tail number of that aircraft, 66-0177 is insignificant. Historically, however, that identification number is very important because it was the first U.S. aircraft to leave North Vietnam with former POWs as passengers. On board that aircraft, which was affectionately dubbed the "Hanoi Taxi," was former POW Captain Mechenbier. Throughout the proc-

ess of returning former POWs to the United States, the "Hanoi Taxi" was a vital resource as were many other aircraft that were needed to accomplish such an honorable mission. In the years following February 1973, the Hanoi Taxi's history and legacy had been temporarily forgotten while the aircraft carried out a long and proud period of service within the Air Force fleet. Today, over 30 years later, the Hanoi Taxi is still flying airlift missions for the 445th Airlift Wing at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, OH.

At the same time, the life of Ed Mechenbier has also moved forward. Following several assignments that include flying with the 4950th Test Wing and the 162nd Tactical Fighter Squadron, the young Air Force Academy cadet of 1964 is now leaving military service as a major general in the United States Air Force Reserve. Through the many promotions and the many assignments, Ed never forgot who he was and his keen sense of perspective tends to bring calmness in times of difficulty.

Several years ago, as a member of the 445th Airlift Wing, Ed reunited with the Hanoi Taxi in his capacity as a member of the United States Air Force Reserve. The historic aircraft and the former POW, who was once a passenger on the aircraft, became one of its pilots. Recently, Ed Mechenbier made his final flight as a command pilot having accumulated more than 3,500 hours flight time in several military aircraft. The final flight was more than just a trip around the traffic pattern—the final mission was one that would take him half way around the world to land at the Noi Bai airport in Hanoi. The mission was to return to American soil the remains of American service members who had been missing in action during the Vietnam era and recently recovered from central Vietnam by U.S. military officials. On this mission, the Hanoi Taxi once again returned to Vietnam and the former passenger, Ed Mechenbier was at the controls of the aircraft. Once again, the Hanoi Taxi returned to freedom the remains of fallen comrades from a war that has not been forgotten.

During a repatriation ceremony that was conducted prior to departure for return to the United States, Ed Mechenbier said this to those who gathered to honor the fallen comrades: "For those of us who were fortunate enough to come home, I think we owe a little bit to all the families—to help them make the closure on that end." The last operational mission was carried out in the same manner that Ed Mechenbier has conducted himself since 1964—with honor, with pride, and with a tremendous sense of duty.

On June 30, 2004, MG Ed Mechenbier and several hundred of his friends will gather to celebrate his retirement. Even though retirement signifies an ending of sorts, his legacy of excellence, commitment, patriotism, and